

PLANNING AND CONSERVATION LEAGUE



SEND SF BAY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT - NOT WETLANDS - DOWN THE DRAIN

In the interest of protecting the San Francisco Bay, restoring wetlands, and preventing unwise development along the California coast, the Planning and Conservation League opposes the Saltworks 50-50 Plan that is backed by Cargill Inc. and Arizona-based DMB Associates. This development proposal would partly develop and partly restore a 1,436-acre former Cargill salt harvesting site in Redwood City, authorizing up to 12,000 housing units and commercial and public facilities in sensitive wetland habitat.

The salt ponds that will be filled and diked for the proposed Saltworks development provide the best opportunity to restore a portion of the 150,000 acres of valuable wetlands which have been

destroyed by generations of development along the shores of San Francisco Bay. If restored, these ecologically sensitive salt ponds can provide natural flood protection. Such precautions will become increasingly important as sea levels rise in a warming climate; planners estimate that sea level will rise more than 4 feet by the end of the century, inundating shorelines and threatening \$62 billion worth of development along the Bay. This proposal will put even more people in harm's way. The California Climate Adaptation Strategy explicitly recommends against locating new development in low-lying areas.

The Saltworks project would also strain Redwood City's limited water supplies. Redwood City struggles to keep within its allocation of water from the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. In an effort to secure water for the planned 25,000 new residents at Saltworks, DMB purchased the rights to water in Kern County, however, there is no existing infrastructure connecting the Hetch Hetchy water system with other major California water systems. So, if the Saltworks project goes forward, Redwood City will be relying on an uncertain water delivery system to pipe 591 million gallons per year from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta.

The Bay Area must accommodate growth, but it should do so sensibly, without sacrificing opportunities to restore valuable wetlands. Instead of filling restorable wetlands, the League is urging Redwood City to reject the Saltworks proposal. New housing should be focused near existing transit corridors and services, like in downtown Redwood City - not within Cargill's former salt ponds complex. The Planning and Conservation League has a long history of supporting efforts to protect San Francisco Bay; and therefore, we are pleased to join the chorus of conservation groups and elected officials opposing this project.

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